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TO : Department of State, Washington

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FROM : Amlegation Budapest

DATE: November 2, 1962

SUBJECT: Discussions with Various Diplomatic Representatives Regarding the Cuban Developments.

REF : Legtel 215

CONF. NO. 28-46-8

On October 30, 1962, the reporting officer was invited to a dinner at the residence of the British Minister in Budapest, Mr. Ivor Pink. Present at the dinner were the Ambassador from Poland, the Minister from Greece, the Minister from Japan, the Chargé d'Affaires from Sweden, and First Secretary of the Austrian Legation.

During the course of the evening, the recent US-USSR developments regarding Cuba were among the principal topics of conversation. The Japanese Minister sought out the reporting officer to inquire as to the latest developments in this situation. He said that he wanted to express his appreciation to the American Legation for the excellent manner in which they had kept him informed regarding these developments. The reporting officer assured the Minister that both he and the Chargé d'Affaires were very pleased to keep him and other appropriate officers of his Legation advised of the US position relative to this matter. At this juncture the Japanese Minister inquired as to the legal basis on which the "blockade" of Cuba could properly be justified. It was pointed out that this was really a "quarantine" action and that one of the basic principles of legality in these areas was a nation's inherent right of self-defense. The Japanese Minister said he understood and respected this inherent right but he wondered if there were more specific legal rights which could be pointed to. The reporting officer explained the provisions of the Rio Pact and the general rights under the OAS to take action relative to the protection of American states. The Japanese Minister emphasized that he was not in any sense being critical but that he wished to have a legal basis on which the US action could be justified. He particularly raised the point as to whether or not there were any legal provisions in the agreement existing between Cuba and the US relative to the Guantanamo Base which would give the US the unlimited right of access

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to the Guantanamo Naval Base which would thus, by indirection at least, justify the US in protecting these rights of access. The background of the acquisition of Guantanamo Naval Base was explained. The Japanese Minister continued to explore vergerally any possible specific legal justifications for the US "blockade" actions.

The Polish Ambassador was relatively silent regarding the general subject but he did take occasion to stress the "statesmanlike quality that Mr. Khrushchev had shown" in handling this matter in a way which had avoided a major catastrophe. It would appear from the remarks made by the Polish Ambassador that particular stress will be laid on the "statesmanship" of Mr. Khrushchev in the face of "aggressive" action by the US.

The Greek Minister expressed total and complete agreement with the US action, saying that "It was the best thing that could possibly have happened for the Atlantic Alliance."

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The Swedish Chargé d'Affaires said [that he privately very strongly supported the US position and felt that the action was the best possible thing that could have happened for the West. He went out of his way to explain] that the Swedish statement relative to "reserving their rights" in connection with and opposing any form of blockade was pro forma in character and was merely in line with their neutral position and their general attitude toward freedom of the high seas. He said, however, that he wanted it distinctly understood that this statement should be coupled with a previous statement made by his government along the lines that it was regrettable that the introduction of Soviet missiles in Cuba constituted an upset in the balance of power existing between the US and the Soviet Union. [The Swedish Chargé's statements and attitude constituted what was in effect a repetitious apology for his government not having taken a firm stand with the US in this situation.]

The Austrian First Secretary's comments were noncommittal and constituted in general an expression of hope that the matter would be peacefully resolved.

The British Minister expressed himself quite strongly in favor of the US action, saying that it was "exactly what was needed."

Comment: It would appear from the above conversations and from others that both the Western-oriented countries and those countries generally referred to as "neutral" strongly support the action taken by the US and appear anxious, as a matter of fact, to make it clear that their support of this action is steadfast. The Communist position appears to be shaping up along the line that the "statesmanlike" action of Mr. Khrushchev has saved the world from catastrophe and that the Soviet Union deserves a great deal of credit for its restraint and "reasonableness." There is also a peripheral element introduced wherever possible of attempting to equate the Soviet missile bases in Cuba with the US missile bases in Turkey. This was specifically a Russian ploy pursued by Chargé d'Affaires Popov in a conversation with the reporting officer at the Turkish National Day reception (see Legtel 215).

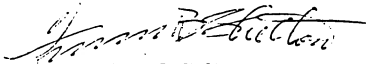
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There is, of course, also a continuing effort on the part of Communist representatives to make it appear that the United States is attempting to suppress the "rights of little Cuba" and to avoid the true facts regarding Soviet involvement in turning Cuba into a military base controlled by the USSR.

For theChargé d'Affaires a.i.:



Turner B. Shelton
Counselor of Legation

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